ESTABLISHING THE MONTANA INVASIVE SPECIES ADVISORY COUNCIL

WHEREAS, the land, water and other resources of Montana are being impacted and threatened by the invasion of an increasing number of harmful, nonnative species; and

WHEREAS, monitoring, controlling and preventing invasive species provides Montana with tools to mitigate the impacts of invasive species and protect the State's diverse ecosystems, and

WHEREAS, these impacts of current and potential infestations result in damage to Montana's environment and cause hardships to public, private and tribal natural resources and economic resources; and

WHEREAS, representatives of public and private organizations with an interest in controlling current infestations and preventing the introduction and spread of harmful invasive species need a mechanism for cooperation, collaboration and development of policy recommendations for statewide plans; and

WHEREAS, invasive species management and response spans the jurisdictions and mandates of multiple different international, federal, state, local and tribal governments; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary that all international, federal, state, local and tribal agencies responsible for invasive species coordinate their management and research actions to the greatest extent possible to ensure the best utilization of available resources and prevent duplication of effort; and

WHEREAS, a need exists to integrate and build upon the strength of existing invasive species programs, to identify areas that need improvement and integrate efforts into an efficient unified state response to the threat of invasive species and their impacts; and

WHEREAS, public perception and understanding of invasive species is critical to prevention and management of these species, advancing a common, consistent understanding of invasive species issues is necessary.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, STEVE BULLOCK, Governor of the State of Montana, by the authority vested in me under the laws and Constitution of the State of Montana, do hereby establish the Montana Invasive Species Advisory Council.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Montana Invasive Species Advisory Council shall be to advise the Governor on a science-based, comprehensive program to identify, prevent, eliminate, reduce, and mitigate the impacts of invasive species in Montana.

DUTIES

The Montana Invasive Species Advisory Council's responsibilities shall be:

1. To provide policy level recommendations, direction and planning assistance for combatting infestations of invasive species throughout the state and preventing the introduction of others;

2. To foster cooperation, communication and coordinated approaches that support international, federal, regional, state, local, and tribal initiatives for the prevention, early detection and control of invasive species;

3. To serve as a nonpartisan forum that would achieve a science-based, interdisciplinary and comprehensive understanding of the current status, trends and potential threats of invasive species in Montana;

4. To identify priorities for prevention and control of invasive species in Montana;

5. To recommend and take measures that will encourage prevention, early detection and control of harmful invasive species in Montana;

6. To report to the Governor's Office on the status of control and prevention efforts statewide;

7. To champion priority invasive species issues identified by stakeholders to best protect the state;

8. To advise and work with agency personnel, local efforts, and the scientific community to implement program priorities. Likewise, agency personnel will provide technical expertise as requested and as staff resources are available; and

9. To work toward establishing permanent funding for invasive species priorities.

COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION

Members shall include 21 members, appointed by the Governor from the following categories: Tribal Government Representative; County Weed District Representative; MSU Extension Representative; Montana Conservation District Representative; Conservation Organization Representative; Private land owner; Natural Resource Group; Private Industry; MT Department of Natural Resources Representative; MT AIS Coordinator (MT Fish, Wildlife and Parks); MT

Noxious Weed Coordinator (MT Department of Agriculture); MT Department of Transportation Representative; Hydropower utility; U.S. Forest Service; U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal, Plant Health Inspection Service; U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service; U.S. National Park Service; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.

Bylaws and voting members will be determined by consensus of the Council. Additional members may be added by consensus of the Advisory Council. These could include additional representatives of federal entities, local government organizations, tribal governments, Montana universities and private and for-profit organizations with an interest in the wellbeing of Montana pertaining to invasive species.

The Council shall meet no less than twice annually. The Chairperson of the Council shall be democratically elected by the voting members of the Council every other year. The Council shall be attached to the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation for administrative purposes, and the Council Chairperson and the Director of the Department of Natural Resources will serve as liaisons to the Governor's office. The Council shall submit a report of its activities to the Governor and to the Director of the Department of Natural Resources annually.

DURATION

This Order is effective immediately, rescinds the Montana Noxious Weed Summit Advisory Council, and shall expire on December 1, 2016, unless otherwise renewed or terminated by subsequent Executive Order.

Given under my hand and the GREAT SEAL of the State of Montana, this fourth day of December, 2014.

STEVE BULLOCK, Governor

ATTESTED:

LINDA MCCULLOCH, Secretary of State